

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114
U.S. Application No. 09/848,503

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 14 and 15 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 10, 12 and 14. Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

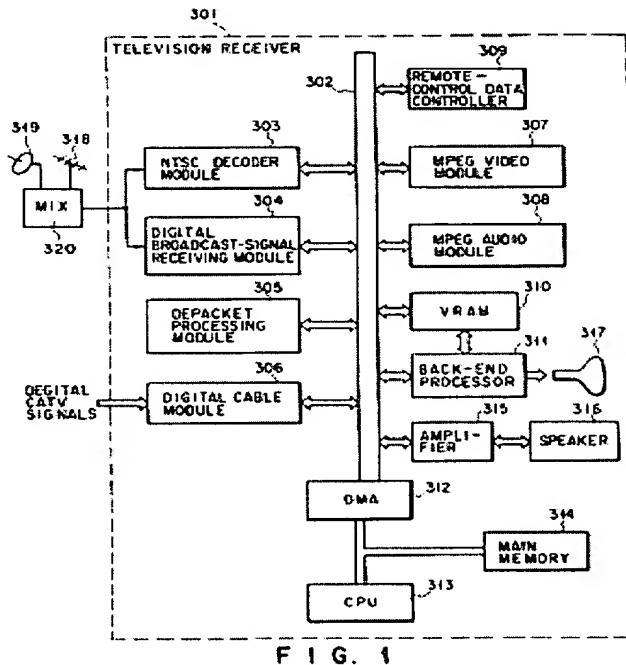
Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chimoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,838,383; “Chimoto”).

Claims 1, 2, 12 and 14 have been amended to recite that “each of the main *board* unit and the extension *board* electrically coupled to the connectors of the backplane includes” four signal lines. As such, the claims now plainly recite that the *boards* themselves, rather than the connectors of the backplane, carry the four signal lines. Applicant respectfully submits that the modules described in Chimoto fail to disclose or suggest the noted features of the claims.

The Examiner has been relying on the disclosure that the “bus” described in Chimoto carries various signals in order to render current rejections (See Office Action: pages 10-11, “The bus carries various signals, e.g. ‘transmittal signal’, a ‘MPEG transport stream’, an ‘analog audio/visual signal’, and a ‘selection signal’, to other modules on the bus.”). However, in view of the amendments to claims 1, 2, 12 and 14, Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claim features are not disclosed or suggested by Chimoto.

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While signals of differing type travel through the *bus* 302, as shown below in Figure 1 of Chimoto, each of the modules 303-316 is specifically contemplated to perform a specific function, and therefore, each of the modules *do not* include multiple signal lines of four different type, as recited in claims 1, 2, 12 and 14. (See Chimoto: col. 7, line 30 - col. 8, line 52).



For instance, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Chimoto that the digital broadcast-signal receiving module 304 would have “an analog audio/visual signal line for an analog audio/visual signal,” as recited in claim 1, 2, 12 and 14. Such is due to the fact that the module 304 is specifically contemplated to receive digital broadcast signals (See Chimoto: col. 8, lines 6-10). Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Chimoto fails to disclose or suggest the noted features of claim 1, 2, 12 and 14.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2, 12 and 14 are patentable over Chimoto. Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5, 7, 9 and 15 are patentable by virtue of their dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chimoto. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 4 is patentable over Chimoto based on the rationale analogous to those discussed with respect to claim 1.

Claims 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chimoto in view of Trovato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,469,742; “Trovato”). Trovato simply lacks a backplane including a plurality of connectors. Applicant respectfully submits that Trovato fails to make up for the noted deficiencies of Chimoto discussed above, and therefore, submits that claim 6 is patentable over Chimoto in view of Trovato.

Claims 8 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chimoto in view of Battini et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,919,792; “Battini”). Battini generally relates to a method of controlling household devices, and therefore fails to disclose or suggest the backplane carrying multiple signal lines of different type. Applicant respectfully submits that Battini fails to make up for the noted deficiencies of Chimoto discussed above, and therefore, submits that claims 8 and 15 are patentable over Chimoto in view of Battini.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trovato in view of Whetsel (U.S. Patent No. 5,497,379; “Whetsel”).

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The Examiner continues to assert that one ordinarily skilled in the art would have been motivated to combine Trovato and Whetsel because “an extra test would be useful in order to determine the presence of the module/board in the system some period of time after startup or of inactivity” (See Whetsel: column 14 lines 56-61). Applicant again submit that such disclosure found in Whetsel still fails to provide the requisite teaching suggestion or motivation that would have led one ordinarily skilled in the art to combine the two references in the manner proposed by the Examiner.

Applicant submits that the usefulness of the identification process of Whetsel is touted in the face of a *significant* uncertainty regarding whether the boards are connected to the bus backplane. Such uncertainty may be especially keen in Whetsel, as Whetsel relates to a system performing parallel execution of test operations where there can be up to 255 boards connected to the backplane (See Whetsel: col. 14, lines 53-58). However, such element of uncertainty found in Whetsel is simply *not* present in Trovato. Trovato deals with an upgradeable television system with a *limited* number of modules 16. As such, Applicant submits that no evidence points to suggest a degree of uncertainty which would have led one ordinarily skilled at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Trovato to *additionally* implement a subsequent verification operation described in Whetsel.

Further, Applicant submits that the combined references do not teach or suggest “the main board unit selects the extension board to transmit the MPEG transport stream processed by an independent module of the extension board”, as recited in amended claim 10. Instead, the selection of modules occur at the CPU 12 in Trovato.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 10 is patentable over Trovato and Whetsel because the cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the features of the claims, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine and modify Trovato and Whetsel to produce the claimed invention.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Trovato in view of Whetsel, and further in view of Battini et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,919,792; “Battini”).

Applicant respectfully submits that Battini fails to make up for deficiencies of Trovato in view of Whetsel, as set forth above with respect to claim 10. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is not rendered obvious by the proposed combination of Trovato in view of Whetsel, and further in view of Battini.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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